

SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY

RAIDER BATTALION



SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER



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Greetings from the Raider Battalion



Opening Remarks from the Professor of Military Science, LTC Nicole Jepsen

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The Raider Battalion enjoyed an incredibly eventful spring semester. Throughout this newsletter, you'll read about our Cadets' numerous activities and accomplishments, to include:

- Honing their tactical skills during land navigation events at Letterkenny Army Depot, a live-fire M4 range at Fort Indiantown Gap (where 100% of our firers qualified!), and a joint Field Training Exercise with Dickinson College.
- Dominating the new Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT), while also tackling a progressive foot march series, culminating in a timed 12-mile ruck. Congratulations to MS4 Cadet Luca Facchine for scoring a perfect 600 on the ACFT and to MS3 Cadet Robert Lissner for smoking the 12-miler in 2:17!
- Actively engaging with the next generation of future Raiders while hosting the annual "Cadet for a Day" event, a JROTC Drill Competition, and JROTC Raider Challenge.
- And embracing professional development during mentorship sessions with LTG (Ret) Les Smith, MG (Ret) Pete Bayer, & CSM (Ret) Chris Kepner, as well as on staff rides to the Gettysburg Battlefield, Arlington National Cemetery, and the Boulder Crest Foundation. Special thanks to Shippensburg Raider alumnus, MAJ Bill Longwell, for facilitating our Cadets' tour of the Old Guard!

During our Dining Out on April 28th, we had the honor of inducting SFC (Ret) Matthew Wright into the William H. Burkhart Shippensburg University ROTC Hall of Fame. We greatly appreciate the support of the former Raider Battalion cadre – to include former PMS LTC (Ret) Chris Morton & Hall of Famer MAJ (Ret) Bill Lloyd – who joined us during this event!

Most importantly, on May 6th, we commissioned 11 of our Army's newest Second Lieutenants. Three more Cadets will commission later this summer. Congratulations to the following new & future officers!

- | | |
|--|--|
| - 2LT Nequwan Ali – Field Artillery (RA) | - 2LT Kristen Harding – Ordnance (RA) |
| - 2LT Brad Cole – Field Artillery (RA) | - 2LT Ben Havens – Infantry (RA) |
| - 2LT Nate Daniels – Armor (RA) | - 2LT Maria Maresca – Military Intelligence / Branch Detail Field Artillery (RA) - DMG |
| - 2LT Ben Delozier – Transportation (RA) | - 2LT Kiersten Melder – Medical Service (PAARNG) |
| - 2LT Tyler Dickover – Infantry (RA) | - 2LT David Pollak – Signal (USAR) |
| - 2LT Luca Facchine – Medical Service (RA) | - 2LT Nate Rode – Engineer (PAARNG) |
| - 2LT Zachery Fuhrmanek – Ordnance (RA) | |
| - 2LT Samuel Hacker – Ordnance (RA) | |

As always, we will send a group of highly trained and motivated MS3s to Advanced Camp at Fort Knox this summer, plus numerous Cadets to Airborne School, Air Assault School, Cadet Troop Leader Training, Project Global Officer, West Point's Cadet Field Training, and more! Look for those highlights in our upcoming fall newsletter.

In the interim, if you'd like to stay up-to-date with Shippensburg Army ROTC's activities and achievements, please follow us on social media listed above.

Thank you for your support! Raiders lead the way!



From the Cadet Battalion Commander, David Pollak

It has been an absolute privilege to serve this program as the Battalion Commander for the Spring 2023 semester. I cannot thank my command team and my staff enough for their support in making this semester a success.

As with every semester, the Raider Battalion has continued to accomplish great things this spring. Throughout the semester, the fundraising department has hosted apparel sales, sticker sales, restaurant fundraisers, and car washes, making over \$1500 to support the Military Science Department. Likewise, the Public Affairs Department has worked tirelessly to increase our presence across Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. In April, the Raider Battalion had the honor of contracting five cadets from the MSII and MSIII classes. Working within the community, our Cadets supported the League III JROTC Drill competition at Red Land High School and hosted the annual JROTC Raider Competition right here at Shippensburg University. Cadets successfully completed two land navigation courses, as well as completing their individual weapons qualifications with a 100% pass rate. Our Cadets passed their first record ACFT with flying colors and worked their way up through a 4, 6, 8, and ultimately a grueling 12-mile ruck march preparing for Advanced Camp. This training culminated with the Raider Battalion completing a challenging Joint FTX with the Blue Mountain Battalion, reinforcing the skills our Cadets will use during their summer training.

Shippensburg University ROTC is an exemplary program that provides a rewarding experience like no other. Over the past 41 years within the Army's Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), the Raider Battalion has distinguished itself in its commissioning of over 450 exceptional Army Officers. This legacy has been upheld by a group of dedicated Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers committed to mentoring, coaching, and developing our Cadets into the best leaders they can be. There have been difficulties and hardships during this semester, but our Cadets have met these head-on and have overcome them to realize their highest potential. As always, the Raider Battalion has proved to be home to many knowledgeable Cadets and Cadre who will give every effort to help each other succeed.

If there is one thing I will miss from this role as the Battalion Commander, it will be getting to work with the Cadets of the Raider Battalion each and every day. The Cadets within this Battalion are the biggest asset we have. Their dedication and drive will always be what makes this program what it is today. I would like to thank the Cadets, Shippensburg community, faculty, and families for your constant support. Raiders Lead the Way!



JROTC Drill Competition

WRITTEN BY TYLER DICKOVER

The Shippensburg Army ROTC facilitated the 2023 League III 2nd Liberty Brigade JROTC Drill Competition hosted at Red Land High School. Our cadets ran the logistical aspects of the competition while also providing Army NCOs to judge and score each event. The varying JROTC programs trained and practiced intensely for graded events such as Armed and Unarmed Platoon Regulation, Unarmed Inspection, Color Guard, Commander's Inspection, and even Knockout. The winner of the 2023 JROTC drill competition was Cumberland Valley High School taking first place in each event with an overall score of 1122 points. A close second overall was Redland High School with 1014 points. This is an annual event for our battalion, giving us the opportunity to establish a great relationship with our neighboring JROTC programs and possible future soldiers. The winning school moves on to compete at the Regional level. We look forward to next year's competition!



Combat Water Survival Training

WRITTEN BY CAMRYN CERMINARO

One of the requirements for Army ROTC cadets to commission is the completion of the Combat Water Survival Test. Shippensburg's MS1s-MS4s complete the test over the span of two days. CWST tests cadets' ability to complete a series of challenging events in the water. CWST helps cadets increase their personal courage, swimming techniques, and skills in the water in order to survive in a combat water environment. Before completing the actual CWST, cadets must complete a diagnostic swim test in the fall semester. This diagnostic test consists of four events. It begins in an APFU uniform with five minutes of treading water. Then, a ten-minute continuous swim. It is followed by a pool-length swim wearing OCPs and a FLC. It is finished with a jump into the deep end of the pool and removal of the FLC upon submerging. The diagnostic test keeps cadets prepared for what to expect in the spring semester.



The required CWST is almost the same as our diagnostic test. In the summer APFU uniform, cadets begin by continuously swimming for ten minutes without touching the sides or bottom of the pool. Afterward, cadets put on their OCPs to complete the other three events. Cadets must swim fifteen meters without touching the sides or bottom of the pool. This is done while wearing a FLC and carrying an M4. Afterward, cadets must step three meters off a diving board, blindfolded with an M4. They must maintain control over their rifle during this event. Next, cadets must step backwards into the water. Once fully submerged underwater, they must take off their FLC and bring it back up to the surface. If cadets have passed all three events, they have met the commissioning requirement. The competition of CWST teaches cadets survival techniques in the event of a water emergency.





Staff Ride: Battle of Gettysburg

WRITTEN BY NEQUWAN ALI

Military History is an important aspect of ROTC curriculum along with understanding the Principles of War, comparing tactics, and studying leadership capabilities of Officers in the past. Each year cadets enrolled in our Military History course are taken on a Staff Ride to Gettysburg, PA to analyze the Battle of Gettysburg during the Civil War. Cadets visited known monuments and landmarks, giving briefings on the importance of the battle and the outcome for both sides. Dr. Grove joined us on this tour and gave us an interesting tale of the 'Bucktails' and is said to be a descendent of a Bucktail. Our cadets really enjoyed following the chain of events and the amazing views.



Car Wash Fundraiser

The Raider Battalion loves to give back to the community! This semester we hosted our semi-annual Military Science Department Car Wash, free to all. Through out the school year we participate in many community service events throughout the local area. During this event students from the Military Science Department came together to offer their time and effort to the local Shippensburg community. We at Shippensburg ROTC strive to embody the Army values of selfless service and will always be ready to lead the way in serving our community! We are thankful for all who came out and supported our program as well as those that volunteered their Saturday to help out. One last thank you to our local Advance Auto Parts for allowing us to use the space and materials to make this a huge success!



EST & Range Qualification

To kick off our JFTX, our MS3's and eager MS2's arrived a day early to conduct Engagement Skills Training (EST) and Range Qualification. EST presents a new laser technology combined with a simulated range that gives cadets the opportunity to familiarize themselves with not only the weapon systems but also the various positions and requirements of the physical range qualification. With much practice on the Simulated Range, our cadets have shown improvement in their engagement abilities and overall qualification scores. MS3's have to qualify on the physical range at Advanced Camp (CST), so it is important that we give them the preparation and resources needed to succeed. All of our cadets met the qualifications on the physical range and had a great time learning new techniques.

Joint Field Training Exercise (FTX: Spring Edition)

WRITTEN BY BEN HAVENS

The Raider Battalion was fortunate to conduct the 2023 Spring FTX at Fort Indiantown Gap coinciding with Dickinson College and their satellite schools. Overall, the FTX lasted 4 days and 3 nights from March 30th to April 2nd. Out of those days, 3 days and 2 nights were in the field. We started off on March 30th teaching a movement to contact drill and signing out weapons that they would be using to fire blank simulation rounds for more realistic training.



Upon that, personnel were assigned to their respective platoon and position for the upcoming mission they would have to conduct the next morning. With an early wake up time, cadets gathered their gear to prepare for a helicopter insertion from a black hawk to start off their training with a jolt of excitement. Overall each platoon would conduct 7 tactical missions and 2 patrol base operations during the night time.

Each mission would consist of receiving a fragmentary order giving the platoon leadership the necessary information in order to properly plan and run their mission. The platoon leadership would then need to take what they were told and delegate tasks out such as land navigation in order to get to the objective, set up a terrain model so leaders have a better representation on what the route and objective will look like, and other key tasks like rehearsals so the mission is run smoothly.





JFTX



By the end of the FTX, every MSIII who will be evaluated this summer at Fort Knox was able to get five plus leadership position opportunities. This gave them the opportunity to not only practice running missions, but teach the knowledge they have learned from their previous experiences down to the lower MS levels. One of the main challenges --

that nearly every cadet struggled with during the FTX was the wet, cold, and large gusts of wind. With the weather going from freezing temperatures in the morning, to rain with 70 degrees and sunny mid day, back to freezing with wind gusts up to 40+ MPH, cadets learned the importance of rain proofing their gear in order to stay dry. Overall, the FTX was very successful and every cadet that attended was able to learn, teach, and add value to the program.





Boulder Crest Retreat

WRITTEN BY LUCA FACCHINE

The Shippensburg Raider Battalion conducted their annual volunteer trip with 13 cadets to help support the Boulder Crest Foundation in Bluemont Virginia. The Boulder Crest Foundation hosts several different programs to help soldiers, including Warrior PATHH which was created to help assist combat veterans and first responders in finding a life worth living. Boulder Crest also runs Family Rest & Reconnection (R&R) which takes up roughly half of its calendar year. In this program, Soldiers' families may unwind, rekindle, and reestablish bonds in secluded, tranquil resort settings in the Virginia Blue Ridge Mountains or a historic farmstead close to Tucson, Arizona. They may choose to sign up for a staff-led activity or choose free time to go hiking, fishing, exploring, or relaxing.



In addition to removing the debris from the stream, the Raider Battalion also cleaned up their roads, trails, and interiors of buildings. The Raider Battalion then gave the charity \$1,000. Boulder Crest provided all the volunteers with a couple of hours to fire bows and arrows at their range as a token of appreciation. The range had several 3D targets including different animals at various distances. The Raider Battalion always looks forward to supporting the Boulder Crest Foundation and eagerly awaits the trip for the following year!



12 Mile Ruck March

WRITTEN BY NATE DANIELS

The Raider Battalion was tasked with completing the annual 12-mile ruck march this semester. Cadets had been training and preparing for the event throughout the semester with a 4, 6, and 8-mile ruck prior to the big day.



The ruck is conducted with a 35lb weighted ruck, a weapon, and a FLC (Fighting Load Carrier). We completed the ruck along the Cumberland Valley Rail Trail, traveling 6 miles out and 6 miles back. Cadets are tasked with completing this event under the Army's 4-hour standard. On the day of the event, we experienced beautiful weather, the sun was out with temperatures in the high 80s. But this weather was not something our cadets had been used to training in. As a team, we were able to mitigate the risk of heat injury and encourage our cadets to push themselves to their limits and complete the event on time. All of our MS3s passed the standard and are ready to complete the event again this summer at Advanced Camp.



Change of Command / Award Ceremony

WRITTEN BY KRISTEN HARDING



The Spring semesters Award Ceremony and Change of Command was held on April 20th, 2023. The Award Ceremony consisted of over 40 awards that were presented to deserving Cadets. The Raider Battalion celebrated accomplishments within the ROTC program as well as academically. Our overall top Cadets of each Military Science class were presented with plaques to commemorate their achievements. The top Cadet from the MSI class is Aiden Brenize, MSII class is Zachary Piampi, MSIII Class is Hannah Culp, and the MSIV class is Maria Maresca. The Change of Command Ceremony was held directly after the Award Ceremony. This ceremony celebrated our Spring semester Cadet Battalion Commander David Pollak's success and congratulated Hannah Culp on her achievement of becoming our new Raider Battalion Commander.



JROTC Raider Challenge Competition

WRITTEN BY MIKE ARDISE

The JROTC Raider Competition is an event that the Shippensburg Raider Battalion runs every year. At this event, JROTC teams from around Pennsylvania come to compete in a variety of different events. These events include the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), One Rope Bridge, Land Navigation, First Aid, and the 3k Run. This year got a little interesting as not only was it Army JROTC schools that participated, but there was also Central York High School, an Air Force JROTC program, making this a joint service League III competition.



One more thing to mention is the Land Navigation course that was used this year. This year rather than just having to go across an open field, there was a river and other terrain obstacles featured in this year's course. Cadets had to make the tough decision of whether to get their feet wet or go around the river over the bridge and risk losing their pace count and azimuth. But I will tell you now that these cadets adapted and made do with the situation at hand and their overall performance. What made this competition the most interesting this year was the unexpected weather overcast. What started off as a beautiful sunny day really took a turn once the wind picked up. Following the wind was a complete downpour of rain. Not only did the cadets have to perform all of the events but, they had to perform the events in the crazy weather happening. But what can I say if it ain't raining we ain't training.



At the conclusion of the event, the results poured in. The Iron Man Award for the highest APFT score went to Cadet Vener from Cumberland Valley. The Iron Woman Award went to Cadet Culp from Redland, the younger sister of our new battalion commander for the Fall 2023 semester.

Overall Performance:
1st - Cumberland Valley High School
2nd - Gettysburg High School
3rd - Redland High School





Cadet For A Day

WRITTEN BY GARRETT ZARY

Cadet For a Day is an annual event that we run to give interested high school students a fun glimpse of what our ROTC program is like and the everyday life of our cadets. The students are able to come to our university and talk to cadets about the school and program. Attendees start off their day with a short brief conducted by LTC Jepsen and Mr. Newton. This brief gives information about the benefits and opportunities of being a cadet. This includes scholarships, CAIT (Cadet Advanced Individual Training) schools, and a chance to become a Second Lieutenant in the Army. After their briefing, Shippensburg's admissions team provided a brief tour of the campus. The attendees got to see the residence halls, the Cedar Union Building (CUB), and our academic buildings. Attendees were brought back to watch a UH-60 Blackhawk land. They were even given the opportunity to speak to the pilots and see the helicopter. There were also multiple activities set up around rec fields for them to go between. These include a mock ACFT, practice hand grenade range, leadership reaction course, volleyball, recruiters, and admissions. The ACFT lane had attendees run through the events that



occur for an ACFT such as the Ball Throw and the Sprint, Drag, Carry. The hand grenade range gave them a chance to learn the technique of throwing a grenade. They would use the mock grenades and throw them at targets below them. The leadership reaction course allowed them to walk one another through a minefield. One person would be blindfolded as the other guided them through by giving directions.

ROTC Dining Out Banquet

WRITTEN BY NEQUWAN ALI



Every year we host our annual Dining Out to celebrate the achievements and dedication of our cadets throughout the academic school year. From the lovely conversations during social hour, to a delicious meal, and a heart warming senior class video, this years dining out was beautiful. This year we had the honor of inducting SFC (R) Matthew Wright into our Hall of Fame for his outstanding leadership, mentorship, and commitment to our beloved program. Before closing the night, our graduating Cadet Battalion Commander David Pollak presented LTC Jepsen with a sentimental gift from our senior class for her dedication to the development and progression of our future leaders. We are honored to have such an immersive group of cadets and excited to see what is to come next year!



Hall of Fame Inductee

Sergeant First Class Matthew Wright

WRITTEN BY NATHAN RODE



SFC (Ret.) Matthew Wright served for 5 years as a Military Science Instructor with the Shippensburg University Army ROTC Dept. until his retirement in 2022. During his tenure he made an incredible impact on our cadets, enabling them to excel beyond the standard as future leaders. He continues to serve as a mentor for our Cadets and Lieutenants.

Furthermore, he has shared his knowledge and experience from his time in service and his contributions to the Raider Battalion is immeasurable and greatly appreciated. SFC Wright's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Accommodation Medal, Army Infantryman badge, Expert Infantryman Badge, Drill Sgt Badge, and the Basic Army Instructor Badge. SFC Wright has a popular video on YouTube as a drill instructor at Fort Jackson, SC where he trained and developed future enlisted soldiers. SFC Wright is an American hero and lives through the Army Values, following the Warrior Ethos. SFC Wright always kept it simple with his explanation behind mission success. There are "1,000,000 different ways to skin a cat". SFC Wright was Inducted into the Shippensburg University ROTC Hall of Fame at our recent dining out for the Raider Battalion. SFC Wright is the second noncommissioned officer who has been inducted into the Raider Battalion Hall of Fame.



Commissioning Ceremony

WRITTEN BY RILEY GLADHILL

The Raider Battalion Commissioning Ceremony is always a bittersweet celebration. Friends and families come together to congratulate the hard work and dedication of our new Second Lieutenants and bid them farewell as they enter the next chapter of their lives. The program was honored to have the current Commanding General of Cadet Command and fellow Raider Alumni, Major General Antonio Munera as a distinguished guest. He joined us to celebrate our young Lieutenants and share his words of advice as they embark on their next journey. During the Spring 2023 Commissioning Ceremony, the ROTC program commissioned eleven remarkable Cadets as Second Lieutenants in the US Army, US Army Reserves, and Pennsylvania National Guard: Nequwan Ali, Nathan Daniels, Tyler Dickover, Luca Facchine, Zachery Fuhrmaneck, Samuel Hacker, Kristen Harding, Maria Maresca, Kiersten Melder, David Pollak, and Nathan Rode. Their commitment to their training and development during their time here at Shippensburg will facilitate their ability to become the best leaders and mentors the US Army has to offer! All of the other Cadets and Cadre here in the ROTC Program are extremely proud of our new Second Lieutenants' and their accomplishments! Wishing them the best of luck as they depart on their next adventure! Raiders Lead the Way!



Gearing Up For CST (Cadet Summer Training)

WRITTEN BY HANNAH CULP

Throughout the MS3 year we have been consistently preparing for Advanced Camp. Every week we attend military science classes that instruct us on topics such as Motivating Soldiers, Platoon Operations, Marksmanship, Leadership, Land navigation, and more. This semester we have conducted various missions during lab to implement our skills and knowledge. During the labs we were graded as we would be at Advanced Camp, which is very helpful in determining what we need to improve and sustain for future missions. Finally, our spring FTX has helped us to get a feel for what Advanced Camp will be like.



Conducting FTX with other schools and holding positions during the missions such as Platoon Leader, Platoon Sergeant, and Squad Leader, has given me a chance to work with others and learn what I need to improve upon prior to Advanced Camp. I feel that getting a chance to run missions with new cadets and hold these positions has prepared me sufficiently. Our cadre and seniors have also held multiple classes and meetings to give us all of the information and tips we need for going into Advanced Camp this summer. With our classes, labs, FTX, and the help of others, I feel confident in all that I have learned, and I am excited for this summer.

Thank you for supporting our program and keeping up with our Raiders.

Remember to stay in touch!

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